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THE EAGLE

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THE BELLEVILLE ENTERPRISE • THE CANTON EAGLE • THE INKSTER LEDGER STAR • THE NORTHVILLE EAGLE
THE PLYMOUTH EAGLE • THE ROMULUS ROMAN • THE WAYNE EAGLE • THE WESTLAND EAGLE

No. 18 www.associatednewspapers.net

THE BELLEVILLE ENTERPRISE
Vol. 135, No. 18

Sumpter Township Director of Public Safety/Police Chief Eric Luke has found a means of honoring the officers of his department while adhering to the Stay Home Stay Safe executive order of the governor.

See page 4.

THE CANTON EAGLE
Vol. 73, No. 18

Members of the Canton Township administration have suspended community events and festivals through June 30 in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

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THE INKSTER LEDGER STAR
Vol. 73, No. 18

The racial disparity of the coronavirus will now be the subject of a state task force created by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer last week.

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THE NORTHVILLE EAGLE
Vol. 20, No. 18

Voters in Northville Township will be asked to approve a millage to fund police, EMS, fire, parks, recreation, senior and youth services on the Aug. 4 ballot.

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THE PLYMOUTH EAGLE
Vol. 20, No. 18

Voters in Plymouth Township will choose the names to appear on the Nov. 3 ballot during the primary election set for Aug. 4 from a field including only one Democrat.

See page 2.

THE ROMULUS ROMAN
Vol. 135, No. 18

Members of the Romulus Police Department sent a thank you to all the residents and businesses who have "fed us, prayed for us, even thought about us during this thing."

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THE WAYNE EAGLE
Vol. 73, No. 18

Zeke, the therapy dog who joined the Wayne Police Department last December, has been an invaluable aid to officers during the recent pandemic.

See page 5.

THE WESTLAND EAGLE
Vol. 73, No. 18

Westland Mayor William R. Wild presented a $72 million balanced budget to members of the city council last week.

See page 5.

50 corpses discovered in makeshift morgue

Following the public furor surrounding the abrupt closing of Beaumont Wayne last week, an inspection by officials of the Wayne County Health Department last Tuesday discovered more than 50 corpses in a makeshift morgue at the hospital.

The inspectors were initially refused entry to the hospital by staff members who demanded a search warrant before allowing the inspectors to enter. Phone negotiations resulted in that demand being rescinded and the inspectors, along with Wayne County Sheriff's deputies, entered the hospital campus where the bodies were discovered in a warehouse being used both as a morgue and supply storage center.

According to an official report from Bill Nowling, a spokesman for Wayne County, health inspectors discovered the approximately 50 bodies in a vacant building on the hospital grounds.

"The Wayne County Health Division has launched an investigation to determine whether county health ordinances were violated by the hospital system," Nowling said.

> *"The Wayne County Health Division has launched an investigation to determine whether county health ordinances were violated by the hospital system.*

The inspection seemed to validate one claim of employees who were laid off when the hospital was closed last week. Several of the health workers accused the Beaumont system of hoarding scarce personal protection equipment in the same Wayne warehouse and union busting tactics in the closing of Beaumont Wayne.

In response to the report of the makeshift morgue, a spokesman said that Beaumont "received approvals from the City of Wayne Department of Community Development and Planning, Building Department and Fire Marshall to convert part of a warehouse into a temporary morgue.

"Once we obtained approval, we worked quickly to ensure that part of the warehouse space could serve this temporary purpose in a safe, appropriate and respectful way. Beaumont continues to use the rest of the warehouse to store much needed supplies we distribute to our hospitals across metro Detroit," Mark Geary, Beaumont director of external communications, claimed in a prepared response.

The City of Wayne issued a formal statement stating that Beaumont requested permission for the temporary morgue from the Building and Engineering Department in mid-April, but had not yet provided the requested photographs and documents.

"Without advanced notice, without being able to explain their purpose, and without appropriately fitting PPE to protect themselves from the coronavirus, various individuals demanded entry into the warehouse," Geary said.

Congresswomen Rashida Tlaib and Debbie Dingell from Congressional District 12 and 13 respectively wrote strong letters to Beaumont Health management this month, requesting information about the business model that would allow the closure of the 185-bed community hospital. Both lawmakers expressed their disagreement with the decision and reiterated several employee complaints about unusual practices at the Wayne facility, including the unconventional storage of bodies. Those communications preceded the discovery of the corpses last week.

In response, Beaumont administrators said the closure of the Wayne hospital, which had been emptied of all patients by March 26 and then designated as a COVID-19 only treatment center, was temporary and that the hospital would re-open after the current pandemic when specific state controls were lifted. Whether the hospi-

See **Morgue,** page 6

Canton Public Safety Director and township reach legal settlement

Joshua Meier will resign his position as Canton Township Director of Public Safety as part of a proposed settlement agreement in his lawsuit against the township.

Other provisions of the proposed agreement include the purchase of an equivalent 2.5 years of Municipal Employees' Retirement System (MERS) service credit at a cost of $150,233 which would allow Meier to retire. The settlement agreement includes a $75,000 payment to Meier and his attorney Todd Flood. Meier has 21 days from April 21 when the township board of trustees approved the settlement agreement terms to sign the agreement and seven days to revoke the contract after that signing date. According to township attorney Kristin Bricker Kolb, the township will not purchase the services credits until the eighth after Meier signs the agreement.

Meier has worked for the township since 1997 and was named fire chief in 2012 and promoted to director of public safety in 2016.

The settlement was negotiated following April 13 mediation of Meier's lawsuit conducted by retired Court of Appeals Judge Michael Talbot. Meier had initially notified the township Merit Commission members last July that the township had erred when his pension multiplier was reduced from 2.8 to 2.5 significantly reducing his pension amount. The multiplier is the formula factor which determines the amount of the lifetime annuity a pensioner receives, usually a percentage of final compensation multiplier by years of service. Meier claimed the current interpretation of the multiplier is wrong.

Following a second merit commission hearing and a denial of his claim by a vote of the board of trustees, Meier filed a lawsuit Nov. 7 in Third Circuit Court naming Township Supervisor Pat Williams, Human Resources Manager Kerreen Conley, the members of the board of trustees and the members of the Merit Commission.

Joshua Meier

Romulus residents question waste well operators

While the method may have been new, the concerns of Romulus residents remained the same during a virtual webinar regarding the hazardous waste disposal well in the city.

Romulus residents have been protesting the operation of the wastewater disposal well for two decades since it was first proposed in the city and became operational.

A subsidiary of Republic Services, Republic Industrial and Environmental Services (RIES), purchased the hazardous waste well facility located on Citrin Drive in the city last year. The transfer of the license was considered a minor modification to the permit and as such did not require public input under current state statutes. The state and federal well permits, and state operating license are issued for 10 years and may be renewed as long as the facility meets applicable requirements. The 10-year permits and licenses were last renewed in 2011 and will expire in 2021. At the request of Romulus officials, Republic Services scheduled a virtual community meeting through the internet last Monday to address residents' concerns about the operation and safety measures at the deep injection well.

> *One questioner reminded the officials that there had been a leak at the well in 2005 which subsequently shut down operations there.*

Answering questions submitted by area residents were John Frost, division manager, industrial services and Gary McCuistion, vice president of business development with Republic Services.

Residents submitted numerous questions about the well during the hour and a half webinar, many regarding the safety practices in place and the effect on the area in case of an emergency at the facility.

One questioner reminded the officials that there had been a leak at the well in 2005 which subsequently shut down operations there.

McCuistion said the there are currently 24-hour alarm systems and inspections of every process, including the containment system, and said flow rates and pressure are constantly monitored. He said if there is any leak or any irregularity, the system performs an instant shut off.

Residents also questioned the possibility of the well causing earthquakes or tremors. The officials said those instances were reported at high-volume salt water wells, but that there had never been solid evidence that wells like the one in Romulus caused earth tremors or earthquakes.

Residents also asked about plans of the company to make an investment in the community. Both officials responded that they would look at those opportunities but that the operation just started and that Republic already has announced several outreach programs. Questioned about the limits of distance waste could travel to the Romulus well, McCuistion said that cost is a limiting factor along with the kinds of waste the well is permitted to take. He said the well cannot take flammable or radioactive waste.

In response to a later question regarding the danger of cornonavirus at the facility, he assured the participants that the well does not take any medical waste.

Frost explained that all waste was offloaded in a closed, contained area at the well, which limited the possibility of any spill or danger to the public.

Residents also expressed concern about the truck routes through heavily traveled intersections in the city. McCuistion said that there is some risk throughout the industrial area and that Republic has an emergency contingency plan which includes a third party to help mitigate any such instance. In a follow up response, he noted that evacuation of residents in the case of a spill or traffic accident was highly unlikely but that the operation did have contingency plans in place.

He further explained that Republic has more than 30 years experience in operating hazardous waste disposal wells

See **Well,** page 6

Canton - Plymouth

Canton Liberty Fest and other events canceled

Members of the Canton Township administration have suspended community events and festivals through June 30 in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

"Canton is committed to helping contain the spread of COVID-19," a township spokesperson noted in a prepared statement. One of the most significant and largest events to succumb to the effects of the pandemic is the traditional Liberty Fest which was scheduled from June 18-20. The event, which drew crowds from throughout the area to the township, has been canceled in an effort to keep resident safe and comply with the Stay Home Stay Safe executive order of the governor, which was extended last week.

All special events in the township scheduled through June 30 have been canceled, according to township officials, including:

• DDA Shred Event, scheduled for May 8 has been rescheduled for Saturday, Aug. 22, 8:30-10:30 a.m. in the IKEA parking lot.

• Senior Summit, scheduled for May 13 has been postponed until fall.

• River Day, scheduled for Saturday, May 16 has been canceled.

• Canton Sport Center leagues and programs, including adult softball, have been postponed until May 26.

• Pheasant Run Golf Club and Fellows Creek Golf Club opening dates will follow Michigan Executive Orders.

• Canton Farmers Market opening day, originally scheduled for Sunday, May 10, will be postponed until further notice.

• The opening of the Canton Community Gardens has been postponed until further notice.

• Thursday Night LIVE! Concert Series' first concert, scheduled for June 25, has been postponed.

• Recreation-based classes and the start of Canton Summer Camp programs have been postponed and tentatively may

resume the week of July 6.

• The B.L.O.C.K., as well as affiliated programs and services, are suspended through June 30.

• Summit on the Park swim lessons have been canceled through June 14.

• Summit on the Park memberships, including Kids' Corner, will be suspended until further notice.

• Summit on the Park registered fitness classes have been suspended through June 20.

• Canton Club 55+ classes, events, and programs have been suspended through June 30.

• All activities at the Village Theater have been canceled until further notice.

Those registered for a canceled or suspended class, program, facility rental, or camp scheduled through July 3 will automatically be refunded, according to a statement from the township.

All township parks and trails remain open although playgrounds and park restrooms are closed until further notice. Officials urged anyone using the parks to follow proper CDC protocol and recommended social distancing guidelines.

For more information, visit www.cantonfun.org or www.canton-mi.org/COVID19.

Candidates file for August primary ballot in Plymouth

Don Howard
Staff Writer

Voters in Plymouth Township will choose the names to appear on the Nov. 3 ballot during the primary election set for Aug. 4 from a field including only one Democrat.

Popular incumbent Township Supervisor Kurt Heise will serve another four-year term as he is unopposed for the office on the primary ballot.

Also unopposed on the ballot is incumbent Treasurer Mark Clinton, who like Heise, has served in his respective office for four years.

Township Clerk Jerry Vorva, however, who has also served one term, will be challenged by another Republican candidate, longtime resident and former Deputy Clerk Sandy Groth who abruptly resigned her position last year.

Whichever of them is successful Aug. 4 will face Democrat Nancy Conzelman, who was defeated by Vorva in her campaign for reelection as clerk in 2016. Her tenure was filled with controversy and after her exit an unusual number of records and files were reported missing. Officials from the federal Drug Forfeiture Funding program at the time informed the police chief that the office had to expel Plymouth Township from that program due to the failure of both the clerk's and then-treasurer's office to provide sufficient records and financial documents. After her loss to Vorva in the August 2016 primary election, Conzelman campaigned as a write-in candidate in November and was reported to have received only about 130 votes.

Conzelman's name will appear on the primary ballot as she is unopposed as a Democrat. Conzelman had also filed a petition to seek a term as a trustee but withdrew that petition by the filing deadline.

Seven candidates have filed nominating petitions for the five available trustee terms. Incumbents Gary Heitman and Jack Dempsey have opted not to seek reelection.

Incumbents on the ballot will be Chuck Curmi and Bob Doroshewitz, both long-time members of the board. Also seeking trustee posts are Audrey Monaghan, and former state representative and one-term township trustee John Stewart, who ran unsuccessfully as an independent for the 7th Senate District in 2010.

Others seeking trustee seats are Don Schnettler, Dan Callahan and Becky Krupa, all Republicans.

Krupa was associated with the political action group "Say No to PARC" and then "Say No To All Taxes," registered with the state election commission as Defeat PARC Millage. The group was allegedly formed to block a township public safety millage and defeat the PARC ballot proposal. The ballot proposal, defeated in November 2018, to fund the Plymouth Arts and Recreation Complex, was one of the most contentious issues facing voters in both the city and township, including accusations of vandalism by each side.

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NORTHVILLE - ROMULUS

Township will request millage on primary ballot

Voters in Northville Township will be asked to approve a millage to fund police, EMS, fire, parks, recreation, senior and youth services on the Aug. 4 ballot.

While the millage is an increase of .5 mill, that amount will be offset by a decrease of approximately .5 mill in the millage used for the Seven Mile Road property purchase.

Therefore, according to officials, approval of the Aug. 4 millage will result in no increase in the amount taxpayers in the township are assessed.

Members of the Northville Board of Trustees approved the new millage at the April 16 regular meeting. The existing millage to fund township operations will expire this year and trustees agree to place the increase of .5 mill on the ballot, effective for 6 years, from 2021–2026.

According to a prepared statement from the township, the decision was based on months of analysis and input from residents. The findings indicated that residents are in favor of maintaining the current levels of police, fire and EMS services currently being provided in the community. To accomplish that retention of service levels, the .5 mill is necessary and 90 percent of that increase is needed to fund the public safety department.

> *Therefore, according to officials, approval of the Aug. 4 millage will result in no increase in the amount taxpayers in the township are assessed.*

A Northville Township house with a market value of $400,000 will see an increase of approximately $100 per year if the millage is approved by voters, however that increase will be offset by a decrease of approximately the same amount in the separate millage for the 2009 Seven Mile Road property purchase. As a result, the total millage paid by property owners will not increase, officials said.

Northville candidates submit petitions for August vote

Don Howard
Staff Writer

In Northville Township, the slate of candidates seeking election Aug. 4 includes 12 Republicans and a lone Democrat.

Filing for reelection to the position of township supervisor were incumbent Supervisor Robert R. Nix, III and Mark J. Abbo, who served as supervisor from 2000 until 2012.

Nix said he's looking forward to another term and praised his board members and their commitment.

"Everyone here is dedicated and committed to serving the township and doing what's best for our residents." Nix said.

Abbo announced his retirement as township supervisor in 2012. During his term, the state closed Northville Psychiatric Hospital and the resulting proposed development at the site prompted a period of turmoil and animus between the township and the City of Livonia. The situation led to open arguments, lawsuits and an effort at annexation of Northville by Livonia. Abbo was appointed fiscal director for the Wayne County Commission in 2016.

> *Everyone here is dedicated and committed to serving the township and doing what's best for our residents.*

Marjorie F. Banner, the incumbent township clerk is seeking reelection to the full-time position and will be challenged by Roger Lundberg, a former engineering director at Fiat-Chrysler Corp.

Vying for the office of treasurer in the township will be incumbent Fred Shakdo who will be opposed by Jason Rhines.

Candidates for the four terms of office as members of the Northville Township Board of Trustees will be incumbents Scott Frush, Mindy Herrmann and Chris Roosen.

The incumbents will be challenged by Cyndy Jankowski, Steve McCurik, Kevin Johnston and Mohammad Aslam, the only Democrat on the ballot.

The winners of the Aug. 4 election for trustee will determine which names appear on the Republican ticket Nov. 3 to challenge Aslam, the only Democratic candidate.

All terms of office in the township are four years and the successful candidates in November will serve from November of 2020 until November of 2024.

Yard waste pick up resumes

Residents in the City of Northville could place yard waste at the curb for pick-up beginning last week.

Northville officials have come to an agreement with Waste Management, the city refuse contractor, to begin collecting the yard debris beginning last Monday.

Those with yard waste can place it at the curb on the regularly scheduled trash pick-up days, officials said.

The yard waste collection may be delayed beyond residents' regular service day, since Waste Management is working with limited crews and is focused on delivering essential services, Northville officials said in a prepared statement.

To prevent residents from having to store bags of yard waste on their property, Northville has installed a dumpster temporarily at the Department of Public Works facility at 650 Doheny Dr. City of Northville residents will be able to access it daily but the dumpster is for yard waste only.

"Please do not place trash in the dumpster or leave debris in the drive," officials said. "The city thanks you for your patience and understanding during this unprecedented crisis," the statement concluded.

Sign of the times

Members of the Romulus Police Department sent a thank you to all the residents and businesses who have "fed us, prayed for us, even thought about us during this thing. Some of us like many of you have been forever changed by the coronavirus, but it hasn't broken us. We are Romulus strong and we'll all get through this together," read the post on the police department Facebook page prompted by this sign posted at the back gate of police headquarters. Officers sent a special thank you to Brian and Michelle. "It's the first thing our guys see as they are hitting the road...it means more than you'll ever know," the officers posted.

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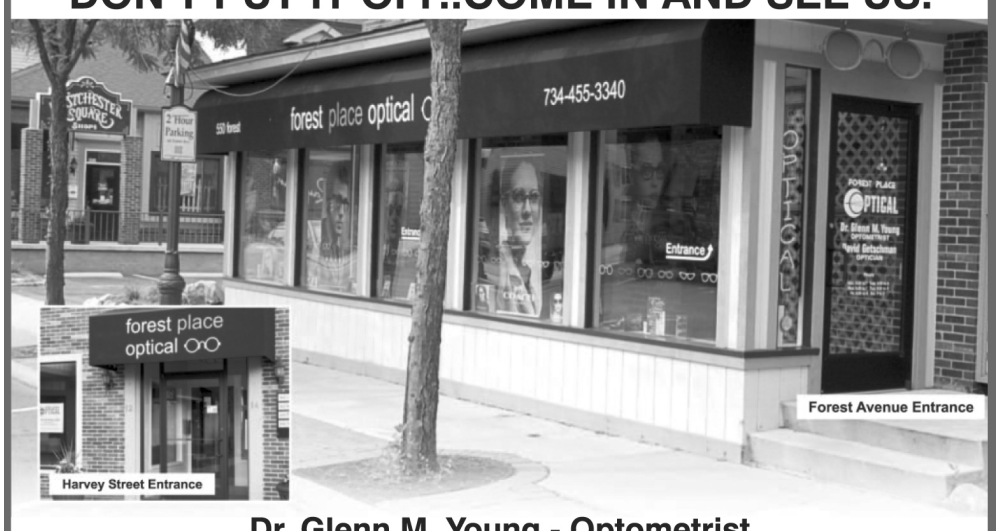

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It's never been more important for everyone living in Michigan to be counted in the U.S. census.

The census impacts everyone from seniors to students, kids and parents and our local businesses and neighborhoods. Participating in the census is a civic duty as important as voting to our democracy.

To help get the word out, the state of Michigan has launched the Be Counted campaign to communicate the importance of completing the census, dispel myths and help ensure every Michigander is counted in the 2020 Census.

The census form is available in several different languages in addition to English, including Spanish. You are not required to be a citizen in order to complete the 2020 Census, and there are no citizenship questions on the census form.

The census takes place every 10 years with the goal of counting everyone living in the United States. Invitations to complete the 2020 Census will begin arriving in mailboxes across Southeast Michigan in March.

For the first time, the census can be filled out online, as well as by phone or mail, making it more convenient than ever.

Also, your information is 100% confidential and by law cannot be shared with anyone. Census data is only used to produce demographic statistics and will not be used in a way that will identify you or your household.

Completing the 2020 Census is critical to the future of our state. There is $3,000 in federal funding at stake for every person who completes the census.

The 2020 Census will ask questions about the number of people living in your household on April 1, 2020, and ask their names, ages, genders, race, dates of birth, relationship status, phone numbers and whether your home is owned or rented.

Participation in the census determines funding for local communities and essential services, including public safety, schools, housing, health care, and senior programs. Michigan receives nearly $30 billion per year in federal funding for these and many other critical programs. Census numbers also help determine how many congressional seats Michigan will have.

Be sure to fill out your census form and Be Counted in 2020.

To learn more, visit www.michigan.gov/census2020/.

Kerry Ebersole Singh is Michigan's 2020 Census executive director.

Advertisement

Belleville - Sumpter - Van Buren

Sumpter police awards go digital during pandemic

Sumpter Township Director of Public Safety/Police Chief Eric Luke has found a means of honoring the officers of his department while adhering to the Stay Home Stay Safe executive order of the governor. That safety measure has curtailed official meetings of the Sumpter Township Board of Trustees and has delayed an important presentation to officers of the department.

Traditionally, the exemplary work of township police officers is recognized during an official meeting of the board of trustees attended by the public, friends and family members. With the delay of those meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, those meetings have been delayed for the month of April, when the awards would usually be presented.

To compensate for that lack of public recognition, Luke recently had the names of the honored officers listed on the police department Facebook page.

"Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we're not sure when this type of gathering will be able to occur again safely," the chief commented on the entry. "These officers deserve to be recognized for their outstanding work, though. I ask that we all take a moment to acknowledge and congratulate the award winners for 2019," Luke posted.

> *These officers deserve to be recognized for their outstanding work, though. I ask that we all take a moment to acknowledge and congratulate the award winners for 2019.*

OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Chosen as 2019 Officer of the Year was Ofc. Bart Devos.

His selection was based on his significant contribution to the mission of the Sumpter Township Police Department, Luke noted.

"Officer Devos exemplifies duty, honor, and integrity. His dedication and work ethic is top-notch, and he demonstrates the highest standard of character and professional conduct," Luke explained. "His care for the community is evident at all times and his contributions are essential to the success of the department."

LIFE-SAVING AWARD

The Life Saving Award is presented each year to an officer or officers who are credited with actively saving a human life. Chosen for the award this year were Sgt. Beth Egerer, Sgt. Joseph Balowski, Ofc. Colleen Gottschalk, Ofc. Chris Herrick, Ofc. Bart Devos, Ofc. Ken Toney, and Ofc. Jesiah Rodriguez

Gottschalk and Toney were selected for the award based on their response Feb. 26, 2019 to a residence on Sumpter Road where they discovered an unresponsive overdose victim. The officers administered Narcan, saving the 27-year-old man's life.

Gottschalk and Devos were selected for their response June 5, 2019, to a residence on Nevada Street for an Opioid overdose victim not breathing. They provided life-saving measures in the form of Narcan, saving the 31-year-old woman's life.

Balowski, Herrick and Rodriguez were honored for their response on Oct. 21, 2019, to a residence on Texas Street for an Opioid overdose victim not breathing. They provided life-saving measures in the form of Narcan, saving the 28-year-old man's life.

Egerer was awarded for her response on Nov. 10, 2019, to a residence on Rustic Lane North for an Opioid overdose victim not breathing. She provided life-saving measures in the form of Narcan, saving the 32-year-old man's life.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award is presented to a department member who advances their educational level while continually working for the department. This year, Sgt. Beth Egerer and Sgt. Brian Stffani were honored for their respective graduations from the Eastern Michigan University School of Police Staff and Command in October, 2019.

VALUED SERVICE

Members qualifying for this award have accrued a minimum of 20 years of continued service in the department. The officer must demonstrate a consistent commitment to the department through the quality of work performed. This year, the award was posthumously presented to Det./Corp. John Ashby. The award honored his 20th anniversary with the department in 2019.

"Sadly, Det./Cpl. Ashby lost his battle with cancer and passed on Feb. 28, 2020," Luke noted.

PATROL PRODUCTIVITY

Honored as the most productive road patrol members during 2019 were Sgt. Beth Egerer on the day shift, Ofc. Bart Devos on the night shift and Ofc. Sean Hudson on the float shift.

CHIEF'S RECOGNITION

The chief of police may present this award to a member of the police department for any reason deemed worthy of recognition. Selected for the honor this year were: Lt. Patrick Gannon; Operations Coordinator Malissa Paquette; Det./Sgt. John Toth; Sgt. Beth Egerer; Corp. Todd Schrecengost of the Belleville Police Department and Ofc. Sarah Dzagulones, also of the Belleville Police Department.

Gannon and Paquette were selected as a result of their work when the police department undertook a switch of the Records Management System (RMS) and Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) in late 2019, moving to the CLEMIS system operated by Oakland County.

"A switch like this is a considerable undertaking for any department but was completed in a relatively short period and with very few hurdles due to their extraordinary work ethic, dedication, knowledge, and professionalism," Luke said.

Toth, Egerer, Schrecengost and Dzagulones were chosen for the honor as a result of an Oct. 2, 2019 joint investigation between the Sumpter Police Department and the Belleville Police Department after threats were made against both departments in addition to the Van Buren Public Schools. These threats were sent from bogus Facebook and email accounts.

"Due to the excellent police work of these officers, the investigation quickly identified the 22-year-old Belleville resident behind the fake accounts/threats, and he was subsequently arrested and charged with two felony counts; false report or threat of terrorism and using a computer to commit a crime," Luke said. The suspect has since entered a guilty plea to the charges.

"I want to thank the award recipients along with all other members of the department for a job well done in 2019. Thank you for your continued dedication and service to the community," Luke concluded.

Candidates file nominating petitions for Aug. 4 township vote

Candidates for office in Sumpter Township had until 4 p.m. last Tuesday to file nominating petitions for office.

While The Eagle was able to print names of most candidates last week, due to an early press time, the names of all the candidates on the Aug. 4 ballot were not included.

Seeking the office of supervisor is incumbent Supervisor John W. Morgan who will be challenged by Nelson Po; Antoine Jordan; Tim Bowman and Denise Komora.

Incumbent Township Clerk Esther Hurst will seek reelection and will be opposed by candidate Sherry Olds.

Four incumbent trustees also filed affidavits declaring their candidacy for re-election, including Matt Oddy, Don LaPorte, Don Swinson and Tim Rush. On Monday, additional petitions had been filed for trustee seats by Sheena Barnes, Ken Myers, Peggy Morgan and Eric Partridge.

Filing nominating petitions for the office of treasurer were James Clark and Vincent Warren. Incumbent Treasurer Kenneth Bednark did not file a re-election petition with the office of the township clerk.

> *The election will be on Tuesday, Aug. 4 during the presidential primary election in the state.*

Terms for all offices in the township are four years. The story last week also inadvertently contained an erroneous election date.

The election will be on Tuesday, Aug. 4 during the presidential primary election in the state.

Van Buren Township Fire Chief returns from leave

Fire Chief Amy Brow received a warm welcome when she returned to work last Monday following a leave of absence.

Director of Public Safety Greg Laurain said was pleased to see Brow return to her position.

"I'm pleased to announce that Amy Brow will be returning back to work as Van Buren Township Fire Chief and would like to thank Interim Chief (David) McInally for his leadership during Chief Brow's leave. McInally has performed an exemplary job these past several months, especially during the COVID-19 crisis," Laurain said.

> *She empowers her staff to do better, always act with safety in mind, and remain physically and mentally fit.*

McInally has served as interim fire chief since January. He will return to his position of fire marshal in the township.

"It was a pleasure filling in for Chief Brow while she was on leave. We have a very professional department that works hard for each other and their community. I am honored to have led such an awesome group of people, and even prouder to go back to work alongside them again. Thank you to Chief Brow, Director Laurain, and the Township Board for giving me the opportunity," said McInally.

Brow has been employed with Van Buren Township since April 2017 and has implemented many new changes under her leadership, McInally commented.

"She empowers her staff to do better, always act with safety in mind, and remain physically and mentally fit," said McInally.

Brow helped expand the fire department to six full-time firefighters, led the purchasing of new and improved equipment for the department, and is responsible for several other improvements, officials said.

"Without Amy Brow's leadership, our fire department would not be what it is today. We're thankful for Interim Chief McInally's hard work during her leave and excited to welcome back Fire Chief Brow," said Supervisor Kevin McNamara.

Fire Chief Amy Brow

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WAYNE - WESTLAND

Westland mayor submits balanced budget to council

Westland Mayor William R. Wild presented a $72 million balanced budget to members of the city council last week.

The budget, for fiscal year 2020-2021, includes funding for planned infrastructure projects and planned water and sewer capital projects along with the purchase of a new fire rescue vehicle. The budget also includes funding for the retiree healthcare liability and funding for curbside recycling, approved by voters in August. The budget adds approximately $60,000 to the General Fund unassigned balance, preserving a "rainy day" fund balance at approximately $5.7 million, according to city officials. .

Highlights of proposed budget include an overall taxable value increase of 4.18 percent and a provision for the city match for 13 federally funded SAFER Grant firefighters, a plan to offer retirement-eligible Police Chief Jeff Jedrusik a 5-year contract to continue his employment, and funds to restart the Curbside Recycling Program.

The budget also includes an additional payment of $500,000 above costs, to lower the unfunded retiree healthcare (OPEB) liability. An additional $150,000 has also been allocated to offer cash incentives to retirees to discontinue city healthcare coverage.

The budget allocates planned infrastructure expenditures of $5.3 million for the major and local roads and also includes approximately $3.6 million to fund planned water and sewer capital projects. Provisions were also included for an additional $1 million in capital improvements, including a new fire rescue vehicle, roof repairs at the Department of Public Service building, and parking lot improvements at the 18th District Court.

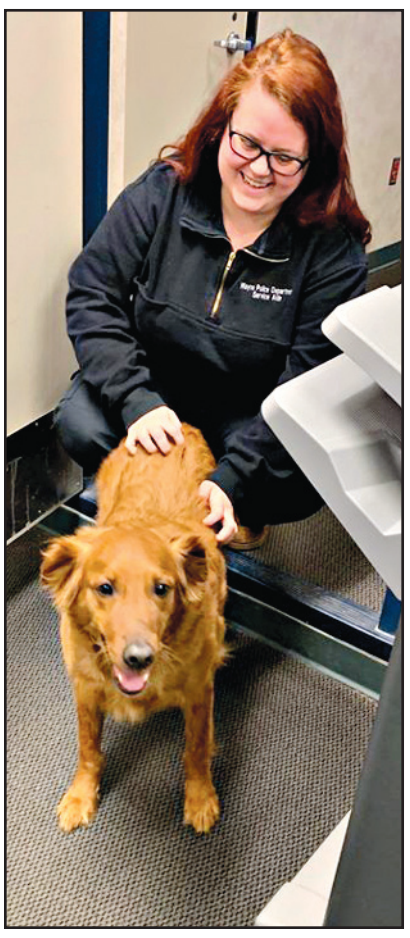
> *"The city's Finance Team has worked very hard on this year's budget proposal."*

In addition, the proposed budget includes several structural changes for central service department allocations to align with a third-party, independent report commissioned by the city in 2019.

The city is also proposing to issue bonds, in accordance with Public Act 575 of 2018, to fully fund the MERS Pension Plan. Taking advantage of historically low interest rates, the proposed bond sale would effectively fund and close the city pension plan for general employees and lower current expenditures by an estimated $1.1 million in the current year and $68 million over the next 16 years, according to city calculations.

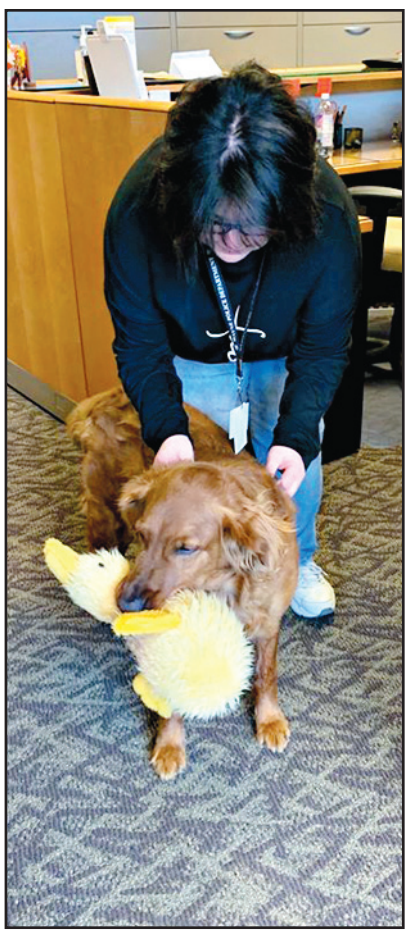
A virtual budget study session is planned for 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Saturday, May 2. Times are subject to deviation. Information on how the public can attend these virtual meetings along with the 2020-2021 budget proposal are available on www.cityofwestland.com

"The city's Finance Team has worked very hard on this year's budget proposal," commented Wild. "This proposed conservative budget allows for continued improvements to the city's infrastructure, increases public safety and makes significant progress towards lowering unfunded pension and retiree healthcare obligation."



On the job

Zeke, the therapy dog who joined the Wayne Police Department last December, has been an invaluable aid to officers during the recent pandemic, according to the official department Facebook page. Zeke's main role is to provide comfort and stress relief to officers at the police station. "It is important to remember that law enforcement is an extremely stressful job. Officers encounter nearly constant trauma throughout their careers - people dying before their time, people at their worst, horrific car crashes, etc. Having Zeke around is a great way to give officers a bit of stress relief. Zeke is always in a good mood, and he is always ready for petting and ear scratching," the Facebook post notes. Zeke is a 4-year-old Golden Retriever and is certified through the Alliance of Therapy Dogs (ATD). The dog has undergone 24 weeks of obedience training, testing, and observation in various settings in order to receive that certification. When not "on duty," Zeke lives with Police Chief Ryan Strong. Zeke has even been known to Facetime with officer's young children as he offers a friendly, furry face and a respite from the extremely stressful conditions the pandemic has imposed throughout the area.



NOTICE
PLYMOUTH CHARTER TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS

If you experience an overflow or backup of a sewage disposal system or storm water system, you must file a written claim with the Plymouth Charter Township Department of Public Works within 45 days after the overflow or backup was discovered. Notice should be mailed to Plymouth Charter Township, Department of Public Works, 9955 N. Haggerty Rd., Plymouth, Michigan 48170. Failure to provide the written notice will prevent recovery of damages. Contact the Department of Public Works, 734-354-3270, Extension 3, for assistance immediately upon discovery of an overflow or backup. Thank You

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

JERRY VORVA, Clerk,
Charter Township of Plymouth

Publish April 30 & May 7, 2020

PT0294 - 043020 2.5 x 2.074

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF NORTHVILLE
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS - PUBLIC HEARING
TO BE HELD ELECTRONICALLY
May 20, 2020 - 7:00 PM

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) has scheduled a public hearing for Wednesday, May 20, 2020 to be held by electronic remote access. For information on how to view and participate in the meeting, please visit the township's website at https://twp.northville.mi.us/. The ZBA will consider the following variance requests to Chapter 170, Zoning Ordinance:

- 50595 Six Mile Rd. - 170-18.2.S, Article 18 Schedule of Regulations (setback to residential), to allow an expansion of a nonconforming building setback from residential property.
- 15500 Portis Rd. - Article 34 Land Division, Combination or Reconfiguration, to allow a land division where the resulting lots will have a depth to width ratio that exceeds 3:1.
- 16220 Old Bedford Rd. - Article 22 Nonconforming Uses, Building & Structures, to expand a nonconforming setback.
- 900 Spring Dr. - Article 18 Schedule of Regulations, to allow reduced front and side yard setbacks.

Written comments regarding these requests will be received by the ZBA at 44405 Six Mile Road, Northville, MI 48168. The meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M.

Paul Slatin, Chair
Zoning Board of Appeals

Publish: April 30, 2020

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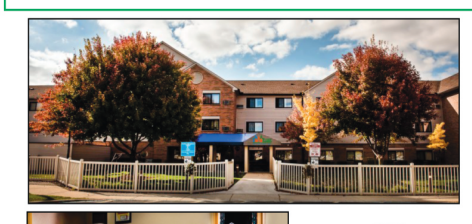

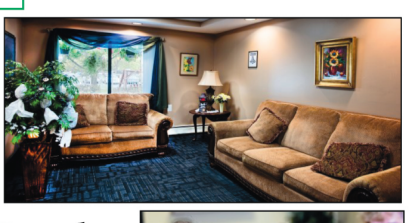

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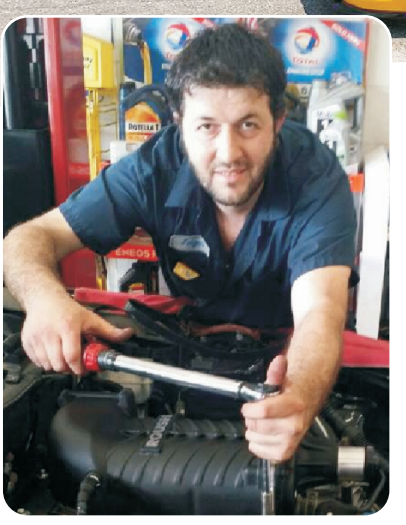

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Wells

FROM PAGE 1

and cited the longevity and safety record of a hazardous disposal well serving Louisiana for more than three decades.

Operations at the plant are expected to begin, the managers said, in about 15 to 30 days.

Romulus Mayor LeRoy Burcroff and the city executive team met with the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy (EGLE) last September to voice concerns about the transfer of the license for the deep injection well to Republic Services, and to request a public hearing prior to any such transfer. The request for transfer was approved by EGLE before a hearing could take place, leaving residents' comments and questions unaddressed.

City officials continued to urge EGLE, the governor's office and Republic management to host a public hearing prior to the onset of operations of the facility. The virtual meeting last week was a result of the efforts of Romulus officials to ensure accurate information was provided to residents and establish a channel for public input on the issue.

"Our primary responsibility is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Romulus. While the City of Romulus has always voiced its strong objections to the operation of any hazardous waste injection well in the city, the state several years ago, over those objections, granted a permit to operate the well on Citrin Drive, and in September, approved the transfer of the license," commented Burcroff.

"My team has been working hard for months to ensure the people of Romulus have the opportunity to participate in a public meeting on the deep injection well and we are pleased Republic is accommodating this request.

"Though current circumstances have caused this change in meeting format, we think it is still vitally important to give the public the opportunity to be engaged with this process. Republic has made significant safety improvements to the facility and we look forward to hearing more about their operations during the meeting," Burcroff added in a prepared statement.

> *Operations at the plant are expected to begin, the managers said, in about 15 to 30 days.*

According to the Republic Waste website, the hazardous injection well pumps dangerous manufacturing waste 4,500 feet below ground into a defined sandstone rock area. The company can accept 26 truckloads of toxic waste per day and has about 200 customers.

The Detroit Industrial Well facility is located in a heavy industrial zone and is permitted to handle approximately 87 million gallons of liquid waste annually.

The company, headquartered in Houston, TX, has owned or operated more than 15 deep injection wells in the country, according to the website.

"The Detroit Industrial Well facility is committed to operating with environmental practices and policies that are good for our customers, local businesses and residents. Our local team ensures that the long-term management of the facility is safe and responsible," the website states.

To contact RIES with questions or concerns, call (734) 946-1000 or visit DetroitIndustrialWell.co

Morgue

FROM PAGE 1

tal would remain as a COVID-19 only facility or reopen as an acute care hospital remained unclear.

Last week, Beaumont also announced the lay off of 2,375 employees across the entire service area and the permanent elimination of 450 jobs.

The heath system claimed the action was necessary due to the dire financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, CEO John Fox will reportedly take a temporary 70-percent pay cut in his base salary and other members of the health system executive leadership team will also take temporary pay reductions of up to 45 percent.

"Temporarily laid-off employees can apply for enhanced unemployment benefits available through state and federal programs. As additional medical services are brought back online at all our campuses, including Wayne, employees could be asked to return to their roles. These individuals can also continue to participate in their Beaumont health insurance and other benefits at their current employee rates during the layoff period," Fox said in a prepared statement.

"Those whose jobs are eliminated will receive a lump-sum severance package and will likely be able to take advantage of enhanced state and federal unemployment benefits. These employees will have the option to continue their benefits at current employee rates through their severance period," he added.

Impacted employees will be eligible to apply for other open positions at Beaumont and given priority, he stated.

"We will do everything we can to assist our employees affected by these changes. We never want to have to make decisions like this, but no one could have predicted the extraordinary impact this virus would have on health care and society overall," Fox said.

Inkster

Governor names 'race force' members

The racial disparity of the coronavirus will now be the subject of a state task force created by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer last week.

The pandemic has disproportionately impacted communities of color, according to state statistics. While African Americans represent 13.6 percent of the Michigan population, 40 percent of deaths from COVID-19 are of African American race. The task force will act in an advisory capacity to the governor and study the causes of racial disparities in the impact of COVID-19 and recommend actions to immediately address such disparities and the historical and systemic inequities that underlie them, according to state officials.

> *The pandemic has disproportionately impacted communities of color.*

"COVID-19 has taken a disproportionate toll on Michigan's communities of color and I am confident this task force will help us identify the factors driving this disparity and to identify actions we can take to create a more equitable Michigan for everyone," Whitmer said. "Each of the task force members will provide a unique perspective and play a vital part in identifying these barriers and ensuring all Michiganders have equal access to critical resource when they need them most."

"We know that generations of racial disparities and inequality has a detrimental impact on the lives of people across the state," Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist said. "The coronavirus pandemic has shown this inequity to be particularly damaging, especially in the Black community, where the health of our friends and family has been disproportionately impacted. That's why we are taking immediate action to assemble some of the greatest minds to tackle this racial injustice now and in the future."

The task force will also work with different groups of community action stakeholders. Given the complexities of developing and implementing actions to address racial disparities, a diversity of stakeholders will provide valuable insights about how best to engage with the community, local government, and health systems, officials said.

The task force will also identify avenues of funding for combating racial disparities in the impact of COVID-19 and recommend changes in Michigan law relevant to combating racial disparities in the impact of and response to pandemics. The group will be chaired by Gilchrist and include Department of Health and Human Services Director Robert Gordon or his designee, Chief Medical Executive Dr. Joneigh S. Khaldun, and a long list of health and educational leaders throughout the state appointed by the governor.

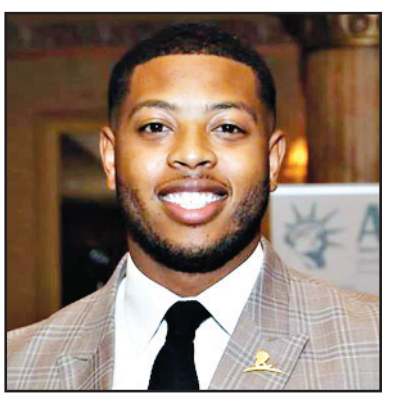
The Task Force will continue to work for 90 days after the termination of the declared states of emergency and disaster, or such other time as the governor identifies.

Legislator praises promised insurance refunds

State Rep. Jewell Jones, D-Inkster, offered some special recognition to the help offered to area residents by some state auto insurance companies during the current coronavirus pandemic.

"I would like to recognize the leadership recently demonstrated by some of Michigan's auto insurance companies, many of which have pledged to refund a portion of premiums during this pandemic," Jones said.

"Socially responsible citizens obeying 'stay at home' orders have resulted in fewer cars on the road, fewer vehicle collisions and lower costs for auto insurance providers. My community not only pays some of the highest rates in the state but is also one of the hardest hit by COVID-19. Reducing premiums during this crisis is a show of good faith that will go a long way toward providing economic relief to Michiganders struggling to pay their bills after losing their livelihood through no fault of their own," he added.



Jewell Jones

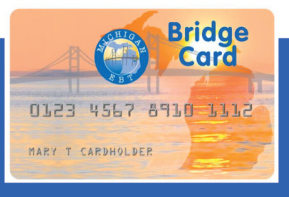
"I am hopeful that this spirit of cooperation can continue beyond this crisis and make rates more equitable in the future," Jones concluded.

Pandemic EBT Program

Families with children who received free or reduced-cost lunches at school qualify for new program

The Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer Program (P-EBT) provides temporary funding to address emergency food needs for families affected by the pandemic.

P-EBT food assistance benefits will go to Michigan families with students ages 5-18 that are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. This includes families currently receiving Food Assistance Program benefits, as well as those not currently enrolled in the program. No application is necessary for eligible families to receive P-EBT benefits.



Families currently receiving Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits will receive additional benefits on their Bridge Card:

Eligible families currently receiving food assistance benefits will be issued additional benefits directly on their Bridge Card. These additional food assistance benefits can be used the same way as families would typically use their Bridge Card to purchase food items. P-EBT benefits can also be used to participate in the Double Up Food Bucks program.

- **March and April combined benefits: $193.80 per eligible student** will be loaded on the family's Bridge Card **by the end of April.**
- **May and June combined benefits: $182.40 per eligible student** will be loaded on the family's Bridge Card on a later date. Issuance schedule for these benefits still to be announced.

Families not currently receiving Food Assistance Program (FAP) benefits will receive an EBT card in the mail:

Eligible families not currently receiving food assistance benefits will receive in the mail a pre-loaded Electronic Benefits Transaction (EBT) card issued under the name of the oldest student in the household. Benefits for all eligible school-aged children in the home will be loaded onto this one EBT card. Prior to receiving the card, families will get a letter from MDHHS describing how to use their EBT card, how to set up their PIN, and other information about food assistance benefits. This EBT card can be used to purchase food items only, in-person, at any SNAP retailer. The P-EBT card may look different from the Bridge Card, but the card and benefits can be used the same way as the Bridge Card.

- **March and April combined benefits:** Families will receive an EBT card in the mail **by the end of the first week in May.** The card will come pre-loaded with **$193.80 per eligible student.**
- **May and June combined benefits: $182.40 per eligible student** will be loaded on the family's EBT card on a later date. Issuance schedule for these benefits still to be announced.

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MDHHS Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

Material produced by the Food Bank Council of Michigan, with information provided by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

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